Latest Bofors Gun offer by M/s. Celsius

† 1385. SHRI SWARAJ KAUSHAL : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether original company M/s. Celsius of Bofors A.B. has offered its latest Bofors gun to India for trials;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) to (c) M/s. Celsius of Sweden have offered to field for trials a 155mm gun mounted on a vehicle on "no cost no commitment" basis. No final decision has yet been taken in this regard.

Upgradation of MIG-21 Aircraft

1386. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that MIG-21 fighter aircrafts have been giving major problems and its upgradation having reached its optimum, the aircrafts arc to be upgraded again;

(b) if so, what arc the details thereof stating the expenditure involved;

(c) how Government think that with another upgradation, the aircraft would regain its striking capability and minimise the air crashes; and

(d) whether possibility of an alternative fighter aircraft has been examined?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) There are no major problems with the MiG-21

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

fighter aircraft. Contract for the upgradation of only MiG-21 Bis aircraft has been signed in 1996. MiG-21 aircraft has never been upgraded earlier.

(b) The contract for the upgrade of 125 MiG-21 Bis aircraft was signed in March 1996, with Russia. The total cost of the upgrade is 626 million US Dollars.

The design and develpment work on two MiG-21 Bis aircraft is being undertaken in Russia, which is in the final stage of completion. Concurrently, the upgradation of the remaining 123 aircraft has commenced at HAL, Nasik and is expected to be completed by the year 2004.

(c) Avionics and weapons upgrade planned for the MiG-21 Bis aircraft are expected to enhance its striking capability and improve flight safety.

(d) Replacement of old aircraft is an on going process. MiG-21 aircraft would also be replaced on expiry of its technical life.

Hand Gloves for Troops

1387. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY:
DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether proper hand gloves are provided to soldiers on duty in Kargil for the extreme cold conditions;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) how the soldiers are working in—30 degrees celcius exposed to frostbite?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Gloves glacier developed by DRDO together-with Gloves Inner procured ex-import are provided to soldiers on duty in Kargil-.